

My name is Cindy Davis. I live in New Milford, and I fully support House Bill 6517.

This legislation is crucial to the lives of many dyslexic students. Too many disabled readers and writers have suffered severe emotional and academic harm because explicit, systematic, multisensory phonemic foundational skills have NOT been implemented during primary instruction. Passage of this legislation will begin to rectify a repetitive system of pedagogical failure.

Educational instruction and reading comprehension performance continues to decline. The NAEP ( National Assessment of Educational Progress) 2019 report documents that 34% of students perform at the proficient level. The 35% cohort of learning disabled readers and writers fall below basic levels of proficiency. This startling data must be a wake up call for the implementation of CSDE Dyslexia Standards:

- (1) Educator preparation programs
- (2) Preservice teacher candidate dyslexia requirements
- (3) In state and out of state dyslexia standards
- (4) Dyslexia in-service to evaluate structure literacy training
- (5) Supervised Dyslexia Practicum in teacher training program
- (6) K-3 Screen requirements implement evidence-based practices and research
- (7) School administrators are required to same reading foundational educational skill
- (8) requirements as teachers

I am a retired CT reading teacher with a 102 license. My years of teaching in CT did not adhere to an explicit, systematic phonemic methodology within the curriculum. The Balanced Literacy model was followed. This model was adverse to my pedagogical belief. Upon ending my career in the classroom, I pursued Orton Gillingham Training.

Of note: when I began working with one dyslexic second grade student, he was a non reader. Using the explicit, systematic, multisensory phonemic instruction model, my student has advanced to the mid second level. He is fortunate to receive the direct one on one instruction to build the phonemic foundation. Without this foundational instruction, the child would be academically handicapped. The emotional/psychological scars would last a lifetime.

Best practices documented in FAPE demand that all children receive a solid education. This can not occur if teachers and administrators are NOT trained to practice and implement pedagogically sound education models for the special and diverse learning needs of disabled learners.

Mandating new educational requirements so the learning needs of students are met is the meaning of BEST PRACTICES. Many states have recognized this need and passed legislation requiring changes in their SED policy. The time for CT to act is now. Too many children have been left behind. This legislation can reduce the number of pedagogically maimed, and emotionally scarred children.